

# The struggle of the Pit River Indians

[00:00:00] **Bill Northwood:** And this is bill Northwood. And my guest today, KPFA is Darryl Wilson. I spokesman for the pit river Indians, Darryl. What I know about the, uh, confrontation initially between the pit river Indians and PG and E but then, uh, between the Indians and the state as well began last June, uh, or at least most dramatically last June.

Is that correct? Is that when the

[00:00:25] **Darryl Babe Wilson:** series that we've had around the first part of June, when. The, uh, Indians always lived on the land. It always in the capacity of, uh, I don't know what, you know, like everybody else was king and then the Indian could live wherever there might be land leftover.

[00:00:39] **Bill Northwood:** What, where is the pit rivers land and where has have these events mostly taken place?

What part of

[00:00:47] **Darryl Babe Wilson:** California pit river? The land area pit river is really a river in Northeastern, California, the pit river area. Is, uh, the ancestral land that we're questioning the government about right now and [00:01:00] corporations, since the deli, uh, is covers a land area of 3 million, 386,000 acres, uh, from the point of Mount Shasta, uh, north and east to the center of goose lake, and then south down to Warner range around Eagle.

Then over to the point of Mount Lassen, the highest point, and then back to Mount Shasta, it's a nearly a hundred miles square, a hundred miles in every direction. It's a little oblong, uh, and there are 531 Indians involved in this land dispute with the government and the corporations.

[00:01:35] **Bill Northwood:** What is the history of the land dispute?

When do, um, white claims begin to date from, uh, presumably I guess probably the 1850s or the 1860s

[00:01:47] **Darryl Babe Wilson:** 18. Uh, 1851 in that area in 1850 was when California became a state. And of course, you know, the gold fever thing, then, uh, people were just flooding into California, uh, you know, [00:02:00]

destroying their streams, mostly to get the gold out of the mountains and out of the streams.

And in 1851 where the constitution United States specifically points out, uh, that land, you know, property is not to be taken without due process of law and just compensation and. The 14th article consent, uh, uh, through the fifth amendment, the last half of the fifth amendment due process of law and just compensation.

So we know the constitution is being violated there. Uh, and so the president of United States in 1851 ordered, um, three Indian commissioners to be suspended from their commissioner duty and to come out to make treaties with the Indians in California, because according to the constitution, this is the only way to take Indian land in an entitle was through treaty, through agreement, through consent, just compensation due process of law.

So between 18 and 51 and 1853, there were 18 treaties negotiated between the Indian tribes. Okay. Uh, but then in 1853, the people were still thinking, uh, okay. After the [00:03:00] people, uh, okay. The white people in California had control that time of 66 million acres in California. You know, like the Indians were on a relinquishing, uh, 66 million to live peaceably on two meals.

Um, they said, wow, Hey, wait a minute. There's only a B goal where those Indians, I said, we can't, we can't have this Senate. They said, okay. See, at California says, don't gratify the treaties because where are you going to kill all these Indians or we're going to remove them somehow. So, uh, so, so then, uh, okay.

That's we say, okay. The Senate didn't ratify the treaties. So we have the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which says this as soon as possible, all of the inhabitants of the seeded territory will have all of the immunities and protections of the constitution, the United. Okay. The treaty of Guadalupe. Douglas is the constitution of the United States says this constitution and all treaties made pursuant here to in all treaties, which shall be made, will become the Supreme law of the land.

And it's a duty of every judge in every state and to withhold the provisions of this constitution and the treaty is the Supreme law of the land. Okay. So we have the, uh, this is what [00:04:00] happened. Congress, uh, the, and the president ordered the tree needs to be made there. 18 treaties negotiated. The state of California said don't ratify them because we're going to remove the ninja, kill them.

Uh, so the Senate said, okay, we're not going to ratify them. So we don't have any treaties in the whole state of California. Violation of the constitution, United States. Okay. And the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo and the Northwest ordinance of 1787, I think is when the Northwest ordinance had said something about, oh, we're really going to be a beautiful thing.

The Indians have been removed, uh, the Western part of the Mississippi river to the Western Mississippi river. And we'll never, we'll never encroach on their rights and their, um, this type of thing, you know, which doesn't have too much meaning either evidently. Uh, the treaties weren't ratified and the whole state of California, you know, in, in that sense then is a stolen a piece of property.

Finally, uh, let's see. In 1946, uh, the Congress appointed an Indian claims commission. Now this Indian claims commission was appointed to hear all of the, uh, the grievance of the Indians to find the bonafide ones into the air, their findings to Congress and Congress is going to settle this question once and for all, there's no doubt about [00:05:00] it.

Okay. The Indian claims commission was to have all this already the Congress of the United States. And it did okay. A study, a ten-year study started in 1946 and it lasted until 1956 in 1956. The Indian claims commission was okay, disband. Okay. It was a 10 year study and to stop it, but at the end of this 10 year study at the air, this finding to Congress that all of the land that my people had originally claimed Coakley in 1920 or, and they were complaining about in 1926 and in 1927, Uh, D fears and in 19, uh, 1946, that they claimed that my people had petitioned, the petition that they had given to Congress, uh, that land, all of the land to Peter of people had claimed, was still in title.

Title could not have passed because there was no treaty. The treaty was not ratified. There could be no treaty. Okay. There was no agreement, no consent, no just compensation, no due process of law violation of the constitution. I was treated violation of the Northwest ordinance. Well, I listen to the president of 1851.

How many acres of land? 3 million, [00:06:00] 386,000. Right now the land is in question is being occupied by a Pacific gas and electric company. Uh, 52,000. Hurst publications, 68,000 acres there. These aren't exactly exact codes. Like it can be a few thousand more or less, you know, but, uh, uh, Los Angeles times around 28,000.

So Southern Pacific railroad, uh, I'm not sure about their acreage, but in Shasta county, it's around 140,000 acres. Uh, and then, uh, there are other corporations.

P T and T Pacific telephone and Telegraph. Uh, they only a claim about six acres, but on that six acres, they have something like \$26 million worth of equipment sitting there.

And I don't know what that was

[00:06:43] **Bill Northwood:** about. Uh, is this largely undeveloped land that's owned by these corporations?

[00:06:49] **Darryl Babe Wilson:** These are pretty wide open. The dams of course, uh, are, are on the river, but the country is pretty wild and pretty, pretty wide open in what we're trying to do now just to keep it like it is. Okay.

No more cutting of the [00:07:00] trees. Okay. Um, no more building dams and the pit river, uh, no more killing the antelope, particularly the antelope, uh, like there were 1200 of them harvested this year out of 1800 hundred. Uh, and none of the hundreds, incidentally, we're Indian. So we would like to, and this is all Indian land we're talking about.

So we'd like to, uh, we're enlisting, uh, the Sierra club now who is not taking a definite stand, but who have said that they are they're, uh, trying to, uh, the national level is working with the state of California. But Stan, they're going to take, okay. But they're going to be forest, uh, uh, in the like no more cutting the tree to save some of the timber.

Okay. For the children, for your grandchildren and my grandchildren. Okay. Whether I'm an Indian, you're a white man's material. Well, like our children need a place to be to and our grandchildren. Right. Uh, uh, and they would probably like to go fishing someplace on a, on a river sometime, you know, and there's no reason to making just one great big lake out.

Northern California, you know, like they would like to have a big glob of Blake so they can take the power out. The dams are built by state and federal power, uh, put state and federal [00:08:00] money to begin with. And the Pacific gas electric company just simply take the power and, and sell it to the people. It's like, no, it's like stealing something and sending it back to the people because certainly they didn't make the river run.

What's

[00:08:12] **Bill Northwood:** what differences are there between the current struggle, uh, being waged by the pit river Indians and the previous complaints and protests that have been made?

[00:08:22] **Darryl Babe Wilson:** Oh, only, only this much. I think that we've gone into a new phase of occupying the land in a position, in a capacity where we would be challenging, uh, the corporations and challenging the government because no one else is going to challenge them for us.

No one wants to struggle against Pacific gas electric company. Even though the F Pacific gas electric company was a public utility. Uh, if your telephone or your, your light bill was, it would probably be about \$5, whereas opposed to like \$30 or whatever it might be. If it's \$5, now it should only be 50 cents.

Really? Uh, if it was a public utility, this is the way it would be, but it's a private utility. You

[00:08:58] **Bill Northwood:** didn't channel. [00:09:00] Any of the other corporations at that time, it was PG and E first

[00:09:03] **Darryl Babe Wilson:** challenge specific gas on electric company. Uh, first we went to, we're going to occupy federal land, but, uh, the last national park, but when we got up there, we found that there were marshals and shotguns and riots, guns, and all this stuff waiting for us blocking the road.

So he said, okay, isn't that a cool thing to go in there? So, uh, at Pacific gas and electric company was the alternative and we went down there hoping that they would charge us with trespass. So we could have some kind of a test case. They did they charged with trespass, uh, and we've been to court to, there were 52 of us arrested, well, 50, because two people were arrested twice, but the 10, 10 people have been to court, uh, in Burney, California, which is very interesting.

Um,

[00:09:42] **Bill Northwood:** that's

[00:09:42] **Darryl Babe Wilson:** Shasta county, isn't it chassis to kind of see Bernie is within the, the disputed territory. Bernie is in Pitt river. Uh, the courthouse built and pit river land, the judges homes on pit river land, and he might even own some land there. He quote on end quote, uh, land there. All of the jury was white.

Uh, [00:10:00] okay. Uh, very bigoted little town, very racist, little town. They killed some black, a black man up there many years ago and rent them out and ran other black people out who wanted to move into Bernie, a very racist little town. And, uh, so the jury was all. Uh, and a judge of course lived in Pitt river and all the people lived in the pit river land, all the people in the jury, uh, the, uh, Uh, all of the people, either like their husband or their son or their daughter or somebody, somebody worked for the corporation we're struggling against okay.

Or work for the government. I have those

[00:10:36] **Bill Northwood:** people where those people found guilty of trespassing. The people

[00:10:39] **Darryl Babe Wilson:** who've come through. No, you see it w it was, uh, it was a mistrial on, on trespass because, you know, you can't trespass in your own land. Congress nodes is, but, uh, like, you know, they couldn't, they couldn't chart.

They couldn't find us guilty of trespass, or they certainly would have. Even on the state level. So we found out that we weren't, we weren't getting any place on the, on state charges because the federal government was the one [00:11:00] that we really wanted to challenge because the first thing Pacific gas and electric company screamed was, oh, well we have our title from the government.

You know, like we were, we're clean. Say we've been stealing this power from the, from the, from the people. If it's a people power taking it from the river and selling it back to the people, uh, and they haven't been complaining, so we've been doing it, but we're clean. We're clean. We got our title from the government titled to 52,000 acres of land.

And now like they don't, uh, they don't have any reason to be there. Legal reason, no legal basis to be there. How are you

[00:11:31] **Bill Northwood:** going to be able to regain title to that land? I mean, what, what process of enforcement of the findings of the Indian claims commission might

[00:11:40] **Darryl Babe Wilson:** there be? Oh, we hope that. That, uh, the enforcement that, that you're talking about, and I'm glad you asked.

So we hope that the enforcement is from the people of the United States, because you know what the constitution says in the preamble, we, the people of the United States in order to form a more perfect governor. Uh, we, the people in the United States are not the government. [00:12:00] We're finding out more every day that, uh, big businesses is the government Pacific gas electric company is the government.

The Los Angeles times is the government Southern Pacific railroad is the government. You know, it's not, we, the people anymore, uh, Indian people never had a voice in government to begin with completely less left out of a governmental representation by the constitution. Article one, section two and article 14, section two, you know, it says everyone has a ability to vote, to accept Indians, not taxed.

So, wow. They really had us in the beginning. But way the people of the United States. Okay. That's everybody that's people. Huh? Um, there we're relying on the people, right? The people that are going to have to do it with us. Okay. For a change, do something with somebody, instead of doing something at the request of someone like we'll stand up there and we're going to, uh, this, this spring who very quickly.

We're enlisting the Sierra club to help us, uh, to keep the paper companies and the lumber companies from cutting any more trees. Uh, not just because they want to keep them for the Indians out because a tree is a [00:13:00] perfect living thing and it doesn't deserve to die just because somebody wants to make a dollar.

[00:13:04] **Bill Northwood:** How did you decide to. Begin your most recent, uh, activities at this particular time last June, not too

[00:13:12] **Darryl Babe Wilson:** long ago, someone said something about like, uh, there's nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come or something like that. And I think this is what's going on, you know, uh, there's an old Indian prophecy that says that, that there is a land area.

Okay. We just assume that there's a land area here and then there'll be a strange power invade the land and. Kill the people and the people were run back across the face of the land until there's no place to go. Okay. And then when there's no place for them to go, then out of that will rise a small nation speaking, the languages and white serpent, and it will be carrying the message that will be given at that time to the people from, uh, from the Indian Jesus Christ, who will appear in the land.

Uh, now, uh, we [00:14:00] see parts of the prophecy coming. Uh, more and more and more, uh, coming true. Alcatraz could certainly have been the small nation that was going to rise and it did, uh, pit river is a small nation rising, both speaking language to the white servant. Uh, so we'll see, uh, what's going on here and the things are really, really popping in the Indian.

[00:14:22] **Bill Northwood:** My guest today has been Darryl Wilson. I spokesman for the pit river Indians in their current struggle, uh, for their, for control of their own land, uh, with Pacific gas and electric company and with the state of California and the government of the United States. I want to thank you Darryl, for coming in to talk to us.

I really appreciate it.